

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3431

INFO USIA WASHDC

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

UNCLAS NEW DELHI 11199

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR IN US

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR KAUL MEETING WITH PRESIDENT FORD

BEGIN SUMMARY: THE INDIAN

PRESS ON AUGUST 22 AND 23

PROMINENTLY PLAYED UP THE MEETING OF AMBASSADOR KAUL WITH
PRESIDENT FORD. THE GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED ALL INDIA RADIO
GAVE SIMILAR COVERAGE. END SUMMARY.

1. FRONT-PAGED HEADLINES STRESSED PRESIDENT FORD HAS
ASSURED INDIA OF "CLOSER TIES" AND "FRESH TALKS." TYPICAL
HEADLINES:

"FORD TO START FRESH TALKS WITH INDIA" (HINDUSTAN TIMES);

"FORD ASSURES INDIA OF CLOSER TIES" (MOTHERLAND) AND

"FORD PROMISES MORE CONTACTS WITH INDIA" (TRIBUNE).

2. MOST ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS CARRIED A PTI DISPATCH WHICH
HIGHLIGHTED IN THE LEAD PRESIDENT FORD'S ASSURANCE TO AMBASSADOR
KAUL OF "A FRESH START FOR GREATER DIALOGUE, UNDERSTANDING AND
INCREASED CONTACTS" BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

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3. THE PTI ACCOUNT ALSO INCLUDED THESE POINTS:

(A) PRESIDENT FORD HAS ACCEPTED "IN PRINCIPLE" AN "EARLIER INVITATION" TO VISIT INDIA AND THAT SECRETARY OF STATE KISSINGER WILL DISCUSS "POSSIBLE DATES AND ALSO ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE VISIT" WHEN HE VISITS INDIA "TOWARD THE END OF OCTOBER." THE REPORT ADDED THAT PRESIDENT FORD'S "VISIT TO NEW DELHI IS NOW DEFINITELY ON THE CARDS" AND THAT HE IS "NO NEWCOMER TO INDIA, HAVING PAID A VISIT IN THE 1950S." (DEPT. IS REQUESTED TO LET US HAVE BY CABLE INFO ON WHEN THIS WAS, WHERE PRESIDENT WENT, AND WHO HE MET.)

(B) PRESIDENT FORD HAS ASSURED AMBASSADOR KAUL THAT THE LONG AMENDMENT WOULD BE "MODIFIED, IF NOT REMOVED, FROM THE BILL.

4. WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT OF THE STATESMAN WROTE: "MR. FORD AND DR. KISSINGER...ARE EMBARRASSED BY THE PUNITIVE TONE AGAINST INDIA LEGISLATED BY A CONGRESS ANGRY WITH INDIA'S NUCLEAR EXPLOSION IN RAJASTHAN LAST MAY." PARASURAM OF THE INDIAN EXPRESS JUDGED: "AT A SUITABLE OPPORTUNITY, THE FORD ADMINISTRATION WILL TRY TO HAVE IT MODIFIED OR DELETED."

5. THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS FRONT-PAGE STORY FROM WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT, "FRESH START TO INDO-US TIES," NOTED: "IN PAVING THE WAY FOR GREATER FRIENDSHIP INDIA IT IS NOTED HAS PLAYED HER PART BY BEING LESS EMOTIONAL ABOUT MULTILATERAL ISSUES LIKE DIEGO GARCIA...INDIAN POLICY NOW SEEMS TO HAVE MATURED AS AMERICAN POLICY HAS BECOME LESS ACERBIC AND SELFRIGHTEOUS."

6. IN AN EDITORIAL, "FORD'S ASSURANCE," THE NATIONAL HERALD VIEWED THE MEETING AS "MORE THAN A FORMALITY" AND CONCLUDED: "DR. KISSINGER'S PROPOSED VISIT IN OCTOBER WILL PERHAPS CLEAR THE AIR OF DOUBTS. OUR TERMS, EQUALITY AND MUTUAL RESPECT, HAVE BEEN MADE ABUNDANTLY CLEAR; AND OUR ABHORRENCE OF MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS AS WELL AS OF SUBSERVIENCE TO ANY POWER CONTINUES. MOYNIHAN

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